Lovely Strange Dark

ULTRABAROQUE DEPROGRAMMER

BY ITOU SEIKOU & ASADA TORAO

CHAPTER 21

Scans & translations
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Raw preps ayase
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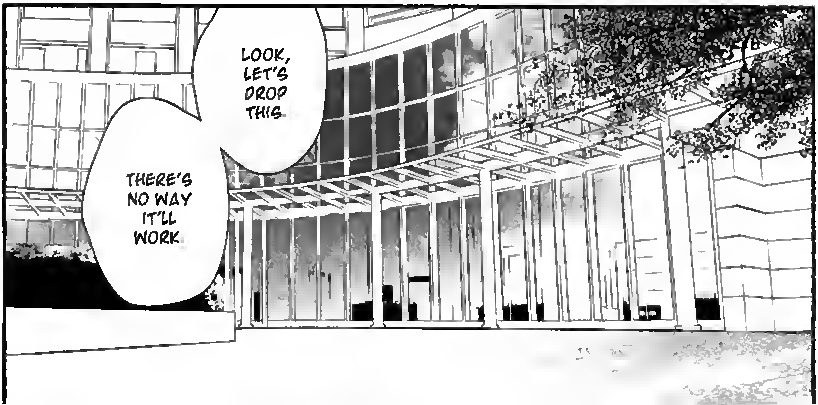
lovelystrangedark.wordpress.com

Wham
Wham
ASH

CHAPTER 21 TELE-DEPROGRAM 2
SWING
SPLAT
CRACK
SLAM
AH!
SLUSH
HE SHOULDN'T BE HERE
ONLY STAFF ARE ALLOWED IN THE SCHOOL
I'LL GO REPORT HIM.

slide
...!
AHHHHHHHHHH!
Hey, Calavera!
Mind showing a little restraint?
I WISH YOU WOULDN'T COMMENT ON HOW I WORK

He's me.
THAT KID — IS ME.


LOOK, LET'S DROP THIS.
THERE'S NO WAY IT'LL WORK.

...!? WHO IS IT!?
CHIKA'S THE ONLY ONE AROUND, YOU KNOW.
COMING!
ding dong
DON'T THINK ABOUT IT SO HARD. I'LL SHOW YOU HOW RIGHT NOW——
ME, DEPROGRAM YOU... NO WAY.
THAT "NO WAY IT'LL WORK" MENTALITY IS A NEURO-CAVE DUG OUT INSIDE OF YOU.
YOU DID!? WHY??
YOU TOLD ME TO GO INVESTIGATE THE HOSPITAL, AFTER ALL.
CHIKA, YOU KNOW THEY GASSED MY ROOM, RIGHT? YOU DON'T SEEM TO BELIEVE ME
ANY LITTLE BIT OF INFORMATION SHE FINDS COULD HELP DEPROGRAM ME!
I DROPPED BY TO LET YOU KNOW I'M OFF TO WORK.

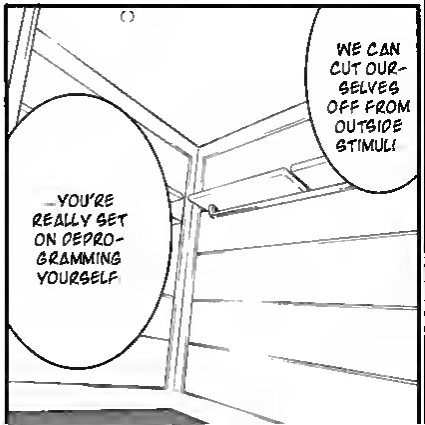
LOOK, THERE'RE ONLY TWO WAYS THAT COULD HAPPEN THERE'S A TRAITOR IN ST. AUGUSTINE WORKING FOR THE OTHER SIDE, OR SOMEONE HIJACKED THE CONTROL SYSTEM.
WHAT I QUESTION IS WHETHER THAT'S EVEN POSSIBLE IN THAT PARTIC-ULAR ROOM.
AT THE HOSPITAL
THAT ROOM IS WHERE CELEBRITIES AND POLITICIANS WHO NEEDED TO CLEAN UP THEIR ACT WERE ADMITTED
THE HOSPITAL MADE A LOT OF MONEY OFF OF IT. BUT THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO. IT'S USED FOR STORAGE NOW.
FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, THERE WAS THIS AIR OF SECRECY OVER THE DETAILS OF WHY YOU WERE ADMITTED THERE ——
...In other words, someone paid to have me confined there...
WHAT ABOUT THAT NURSE? DID HE SAY ANYTHING?
SAKAKI WAS THE ONE WHO TOOK CARE OF THE DEPRO-GRAMMER.
BUT IT SEEMS HE WAS ASSIGNED SOMEWHERE ELSE. I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM SINCE THEN.

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW SKETCHY THAT SOUNDS!?
I'M A DOCTOR ON STAFF!
I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HOSPITAL MONEY OR POLITICIANS OR OTHER STAFFERS!
AH —— SORRY. IT'D BE NICE IF IT WERE THAT SIMPLE. YOU'RE RIGHT.
SO WHAT WAS THE SECURITY LIKE THERE?
I REMEMBER THERE WERE SECURITY CAMERAS!
THEN THERE MIGHT BE A RECORD OF THE PEOPLE WHO VISITED ME
STORED IN THE SECURITY ROOM.
I'LL CALL SORACHAI'S CELL
DON'T OVERDO IT AND IF SOMEONE SKETCHY SHOWS UP ——
NOW NOW, DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ME.
CRICK CRICK
I MAY LOOK WEAK, BUT I'VE BEEN IN STREET FIGHTS IN NEW YORK AND AMSTERDAM
AMSTERDAM?

YOU KNOW, BACK IN AMSTERDAM IS WHEN I FIRST MET NOBIRU.
HUH... WHAT !?
I THOUGHT IT WAS IN TOKYO!?
REALLY?
SO HE DIDN'T TELL YOU ABOUT IT
I MIGHT HAVE EXAGGERATED THE "STREET FIGHT" PART...
ding
What actually happened is I was heading home from a conference with a friend, and we came across some guys trying to drag Nobiru off.
He'd been stumbling through a shopping area,

THE POLICE WERE CLUELESS TOO, SO THEY CALLED IN AN ANTHROPOLOGIST AND GENETICIST
I MEAN, YOU CAN'T TELL JUST BY LOOKING AT HIM
and we couldn't tell what language he was speaking or where he was from.
That's how we really met.
He'd only sing,
so I used every trick in the book to make my case to the government
it seemed like he'd gotten a little attached to me.
Even though the facility there was good,
but no one could place where the songs were from
and was able to bring him back with me to Japan
THAT'S RIGHT.
—BUT THEN HE RAN OFF

*A German child of unknown parentage who grew up outside of society.



WHAT? WHERE'S THAT COMING FROM?
AND ANYWAY, WE'VE GOT THIS HUGE APARTMENT, SO WHY'RE WE GOING TO LOCK OURSELVES IN THE STORAGE CLOSET?
—IS THAT IT?
IS CHIKA ONE OF THOSE WOMEN WHO GOES FOR PRETTY BOY POP STARS INSTEAD OF REAL MEN?

AND WE STARTED WORKING WITH THE MEDIA TO SEARCH FOR THE PARENTS OF AN AMNESIAC CHILD——
BUT WE DIDN'T GET ANY LEADS.
HE CAME BACK MAYBE A MONTH LATER. THAT WOULD BE WHEN SORACHAI MET HIM.
HE JUST TOOK OFF.

— DON'T BE SO GLUM.
...WHAT A WAY TO TALK YOURSELF INTO IT.
LISTEN, SORA.
You might consider Nobiru a nice guy,
but if he's brainwashed, I'll deprogram him.
If he tries to wash me, I'll wash him right back.
All you need is the will to do it.
IN MY TRADE, DEPROGRAMMING AND WASHING
AREN'T INHERENTLY GOOD OR BAD.
...WHAT?
THAT'S IT? REALLY?
IF YOU DIE THERE, I WONDER WHAT THEY'LL PUT FOR CAUSE OF DEATH IN THE REAL WORLD.
D-
DON'T LOOK SO GLUM!
THE DEPROGRAMMER HAS CONVENIENTLY FORGOTTEN
THAT IF I DIE IN THE MINDSCAPE, HE ALSO LOSES HIS LIFE

This kid...
might really be the future of deprogramming.
GET OUT OF YOUR HEAD. WE HAVE A FUTURE.
GET OUT OF YOUR HEAD. WE HAVE A FUTURE.
CREAK
GET OUT OF YOUR HEAD.
WE HAVE A FUTURE.
JUST KEEP YAMMERING AWAY UNTIL I'M HYPNOTIZED
AFTER THAT, DO WHAT WE JUST WENT OVER
IS YOUR CELL ON SILENT? DO YOU WANT TO HIT THE BATHROOM AGAIN FIRST?
DID I FORGET ANYTHING!?
SWAP

SPLAT
THAT KID IS ME.
AH!
He's me!
DID HE REALLY DIVE INSIDE HIMSELF..?
NOW I'M JUST SUPPOSED TO REPEAT WHATEVER THE DEPROGRAMMER SAYS —
AHHHHH!

PLEASE DON'T LOSE FOCUS OF THE MATERIAL WORLD.
No need to be so patroniz-ing!
DEPRO-GRAMMER! IT LOOKS LIKE THE DIVE INTO YOURSELF IS A SUCCESS.
FOR STARTERS, IT'S DOUBTFUL YOU WENT TO A SCHOOL AS STEREO-TYPICALLY JAPANESE AS THIS ONE
BUT IT'S ALL BASED ON HAVING SORACHAI REPEAT YOUR WORD COMMANDS.
THE DOOR TO THE MINDSCAPE OPENS, AND WE'RE GREETED WITH THIS
HE'S US.
IT'S A FALSE MEMORY
A FAKE SCHOOL DAY, LOOKS LIKE
IT'S FAKE !?

tug
LET'S HIT IT HARD AND FAST
THIS MEMORY WASN'T PUT TOGETHER ALL THAT WELL
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ppy
ppy

AH...
AHHH ...!
FLOOM